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ABSTRACT

Sixty seventh and eighth grade students participated in a study that investigated students' viewpoints and attitudes toward reading and the relationship of each of these to their reading achievement. The reading ability of the subjects was determined by scores on the reading subtest of the Stanford Achievement Test, and attitudes toward reading were measured by the Estes Reading Attitude Scale. Elder's 10 interview questions were used to determine subjects' reading viewpoints. The results indicated, contrary to earlier findings, that attitudes toward reading do not vary significantly with achievement. Students were found to have a positive attitude toward reading regardless of their achievement levels. Findings also showed a substantial correlation between the students' reading viewpoints and their achievement. In general, the results suggest that the viewpoint of a student toward reading is of greater importance than his or her attitude toward reading in relation to achievement. (Copies of instruments used in the study are appended.) (FL)

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A STUDY OF STUDENT VIEWPOINTS AND READING ACHIEVEMENT

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Submitted in partial fulfillment for the requirements of the Master of Arts Degree in Reading Specialization.

Kean College
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate students' viewpoints and attitudes towards reading and to determine what relationship exists between these and their reading achievement. The subjects included sixty seventh and eighth grade students. The Stanford Achievement Subtest in reading comprehension was used to determine the high, normal, and low ability readers. Elder's ten interview questions were used to study students' viewpoint toward reading. The Estes Reading Attitude Scale was used to investigate attitudes that students have toward reading.

The expected results concerning student attitudes were not substantiated among the low, normal, and high ability readers. In the viewpoint study, there was a substantial correlation between the students' viewpoints and their achievements. In conclusion, the study indicated that the viewpoint of the child toward reading is of greater importance than his attitude towards reading in relationship to achievement.

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The authors wish to thank the students who were involved in this study for their sincere cooperation.

We would also like to thank Dr. Mazurkiewicz, Professor at Kean College of New Jersey, for his kind guidance, attention, and understanding he afforded in this study.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

What is reading exactly, and "what is the nature of effective reading? What strategies are used by good readers and how do they differ from strategies used by poor readers?" [1] These questions intrigued Bess Osburn and Cleborne D. Maddux in their research, as well as teachers and other researchers who have preceded them. After eight or nine years of reading instruction, the students' viewpoint or perception of what exactly is reading and "knowledge or beliefs about what constitutes good reading have influence on the actual reading effectiveness." [2] Ten interview questions used by Elder (1980) were given to high, normal, and low ability seventh and eighth graders. The Stanford Achievement Subtest in reading was used to categorize the groups. The authors concluded that students who focused on the word were usually in the below average category in their achievement while those focusing on units larger than a word were of average to above average in their reading performances. The above, combined with the students' positive or negative attitudes toward the reading process will result in successes or failures.

In 1971, 72 Jerry L. Johns conducted an exploratory investigation suggesting that children's concepts of reading be compared to their

1 Bess Osburn & Cleborne D. Maddux, What is Reading? Student Viewpoint Journal of Developmental & Remedial Education, Volume 6 No. 2, Winter 1982, pp. 8

2 Ibid., p. 8

reading ability.[3] Was there a difference in how good and poor readers viewed the reading process? In the subsequent 1974 study, children were asked the question "What is reading?" Responses were classified into meaningful categories. Johns' results indicated that greater number of meaningful definitions of reading were given by students who were identified as good readers. To provide more evidence on this question the following study was developed:

STATEMENT OF HYPOTHESIS

There is a significant difference between students of varying ability and their viewpoints toward reading and attitude toward reading.

SIGNIFICANCE OF PROBLEM

Since reading is essential in all content areas in grades seven and eight, it is imperative that the student maintain a positive attitude toward reading.

"Students' thoughts about reading, their notions or conceptions of its purpose and nature present the most fundamental and significant problem for the teacher of reading."[4]

It has been observed by these writers that in the junior high level, the progression of performance of low ability readers does not show the expected improvement over the school year. Could this lack of improvement be related to their view of the reading process and their attitude toward reading?

3 Jerry L. Johns, "Concepts of Reading Among Good and Poor Readers", Education, Volume 95, No. 1, Fall 1974, pp. 58-60

4 John Downing, "How Children Think About Reading", Reading Teacher Vol. 23 (Dec. 69), p. 217

We, as teachers, in our recognition of how students perceive the reading process, can better motivate and instruct for greater effectiveness and long term reading success.

PURPOSE OF STUDY

The purpose of this research is to investigate the viewpoints and attitudes toward reading of the low, normal and high ability reader in grades seven and eight and to determine what relationship exists between these opinions and the students' abilities.

ASSUMPTIONS

It is assumed that the students will answer honestly the questions posed in interviews and questionnaires of this study.

LIMITATIONS

The amount of time alloted for research and the population sampled places a limit on this study.

DELIMITATIONS

This study envelops the viewpoints of pupils of various socio-economic backgrounds in grades seven and eight. Therefore, conclusions are not to be extended beyond this population sampled, in either lower or higher grades.

DEFINITIONS

Low Ability Reader: A child who rates below the 35th percentile on the Stanford Achievement Reading Test.

Normal Ability Reader: A child who rates between the 35th and 65th percentile on the Stanford Achievement Reading Test.

High Ability Reader: A child who rates above the 65th percentile on the Stanford Achievement Reading Test.

Viewpoint: How a student feels or how he/she perceives something is his/her viewpoint.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Is there a relationship between the viewpoint and attitude toward reading of low, middle, and high ability seventh and eighth graders and their reading achievements?

SUMMARY

This chapter has attempted to point out the importance of recognizing the students' viewpoints toward reading.

Kaluger, Kolson [5] concluded from research that students in junior high school who experience difficulty in reading develop a negative attitude towards reading and expect failure in the secondary school.

It is also noted that teachers of the reading process can make their instructions more effective for success.

5 George Kaluger, Clifford J. Kolson, Reading and Learning Disabilities Columbus, Ohio, Charles E. Merrill, 1978, p. 47

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

INTRODUCTION

As stated in Chapter I, reading is essential in all content areas in grades seven and eight. It is imperative that a student's viewpoint and attitude toward reading be positive.

The need to study the dual-pronged elements is necessary since the student's achievement is an outgrowth of both. Teachers, in their recognition of these two aspects, can ascertain how students perceive learning tasks in school. In this chapter the importance of developing an appropriate view and attitude for reading will be discussed in more detail. Various techniques in measuring viewpoints and attitudes and conclusions by investigative authorities will also be discussed.

THE IMPORTANCE OF READING ATTITUDES

The importance of developing positive reading attitudes in students is evident by the amount of literature related to this topic in text-books, professional journal articles, and reports of field studies. A strong, positive attitude is not only a "good" thing, but insurance for the growth of strong capabilities and competencies in reading (Dulin, 1978). Once the necessity for the positive attitude is established, the next logical question might be, "How is this attitude measured, and how does it relate to reading achievement?" Some authors maintain through research and studies that there is a relationship between attitudes and achievement (Roettger, 1980; Fredrricks, 1982), and that there are

scales and inventories that seemingly measure this behaviorial attitude to an accurate degree (Estes, 1971; Mikulecky, 1977). It is generally acknowledged that building a positive attitude toward reading would benefit the student; so therefore, developing attitudes toward reading should be of prime concern to the teacher of reading. As noted below, the work of various authors supports these conclusions.

ANN KIRTLAND HEALY

Ann Kirtland Healy's "investigation was to find more effective ways of developing a genuine liking for reading in children."[1] An experiment in 1963 with heterogeneous groups of children proved that attitudes could be changed in an experimental setting. Pilot Group I served as exploratory subjects. Each was allowed to choose his reading group according to interest rather than ability. Grouping was flexible allowing those who miscast themselves to move to another group and various materials and creative activities were employed. Group II was given basic readers and demonstrated their competency by completing comprehension and vocabulary tests. The children were given the opportunity to work with partners, visit the Interest Center and have a silent reading period the last thirty minutes of each school day.

Group III children were assigned to a basic reading text according to the placement recommended by the teacher. When changes in attitudes were examined, it was found that "children who were allowed to choose reading groups according to interest and select reading materials from

1 Ann Kirtland Healy, "Changing Children's Attitudes Towards Reading", Elementary English, Volume 40, March 1963, p. 255

a wide variety proved to be the most conducive to developing a genuine liking for reading." [2] Both liking and attitude were "determined by questionnaires, observations, pupil responses to displayed books and magazines, and reactions to assignments involving silent reading." [3]

MARGARET GREER

In Margaret Greer's article "Affective Growth through Reading" (1972), the basic element in affective development is "feeling". She refers to feeling as a process having depth and breadth an "energy force" [4] in each individual. "Depth refers to the intensity, the degree of experiencing at a given moment, while breadth denotes that which is felt, the products of feeling emotions." [5] Affective development is a continuum of growth involving three basic elements, feeling - emotions - values. Hence, planning a reading program in which each learner has the opportunity to fulfill his own affective potential as well as skills is a vital part of the reading program. The reading teacher provides opportunities for broad range of activities to make possible the exchange of viewpoints, attitudes and emotions. "Through similar encounters over a period of time, each individual's affective store is enriched by exposure to attitudes and values different from his own." [6] Even upper grade children may share in affective reading experiences involving the feeling process while listening to the teacher read a story or book.

2 Ibid., p. 257
3 Ibid., p. 255
4 Margaret Greer, "Affective Growth through Reading", Reading Teacher, January 1972, p. 337
5 Ibid., p. 337
6 Ibid., p. 338

The teacher becomes a model as she reveals by her responses an emotional involvement in that which is being read. There is a broader dimension of the affective process. Hence, "facilitating cognitive and physical growth through a systematically planned and sequentially planned program, as well as emphasis to the affective growth has long been a goal of education." [7]

A. STERL ARTLEY

In the quest to identify the characteristics and practices of good teachers of reading, A. Sterl Artley (1975) made a study of one hundred junior and senior college education majors. These students were asked to recall their own reading experiences that indicated effective or ineffective teaching.

Artley devised three questions:

1. What did your teachers do that you feel promoted confidence and interest in reading?
2. Was there anything that your teachers did that detracted from your interest in reading?
3. Was there someone or something besides your teacher who contributed to your competence and interest in reading? [8]

From the written responses, Artley was disturbed over the fact that so many of the students could recall little that was done by their teachers to promote a positive attitude toward reading. Too much skill drilling and not enough emphasis on excitement and rewards of reading were cited frequently.

7 Ibid., p. 340
8 A. Sterl Artley, "Good Teachers of Reading - Who Are They?" The Reading Teacher, October 1975, p. 26

Artley concluded the enthusiasm and techniques of the teachers were of prime importance in building success of the student.

GEORGE KALUGA AND CLIFFORD J. KOLSON

George Kaluga and Clifford J. Kolson (1978) state that every child begins school expecting to learn to read. He has seen older brothers and sisters attend school and learn to read. Hence, it is expected that he learns to read.

The child who encounters difficulty in learning to read over the years develops an "antagonistic or futile attitude toward reading until by the time he reaches secondary school his attitude is one of expecting failure and avoidance of the unpleasant reading situation. The secondary teacher must now cope with a child who cannot read and who is against reading." [9]

The combination of poor reading skills and the added attitudinal problem collaborates with the present study.

KENNETH L. DULIN

Kenneth L. Dulin (1978) uses the term "affect" as "any educational experience involved in the development of certain values, attitudes or feelings." [10] He makes note of the fact that "the primary reason most of us in the field of reading are so eager to develop strong, positive attitudes toward reading in our students is simply because we feel this is a good thing to do." [11] It is generally hoped that students develop

9 George Kaluga and Clifford J. Kolson, Reading and Learning Disabilities, Second Edition, Charles E. Merrill Publishing Co., 1978, p. 47

10 Kenneth L. Dulin, "Reading and the Affective Domain", Aspects of Reading Education, Susanna Pflaum, Editor (McCutchan Publishing Corp., California, 1978, p. 106

11 Ibid., p. 109

a positive attitude toward reading which combined with their viewpoint, will help their achievement.

DAVID S. MARTIN

In a paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Secondary Teachers' Association of Reading, David S. Martin (1979) addressed the problem of what teachers can do to improve attitudes about reading. He mentioned several specific actions that educators could take, not only to improve the reading attitude of students, but parents and the public, as well. Included in his suggestions was the idea to go public with any worthwhile project or lesson. Sending home newsletters, making board of education presentations and publishing in the local newspapers were all mentioned as ways in which to meet the challenge of building better attitudes about reading.

DORIS ROETTGER

A different slant to the attitude versus achievement studies was undertaken by Roettger in 1980. A certain group of children were selected for this study because after being given the Estes Attitude Test, they were the ones who contradicted the belief that children who read well have positive attitudes, while those who do not read well have negative attitudes. The children were told that the investigator was interested in finding out how they felt about teading and why they felt as they did.

The responses indicated that children who scored high with attitudes, but had low performance, viewed reading as a tool for survival. Low attitude, but high performance students saw reading as a means of gaining information to help them get good school grades and learn more about the world.

The significance of this study, as viewed by the author, was that it would help teachers respond to the different needs of each group. Knowing this, "will help teachers and librarians focus on locating the right books to stimulate these youngsters to read more." [12]

THOMAS N. TURNER AND J. ESTELL ALEXANDER

In a paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Southeastern Regional Conference of the International Reading Association in 1980, Thomas N. Turner and J. Estell Alexander made suggestions for improving reading attitudes. They further stated that, "how a learner feels about information being processed affects his learning and later utilization of that information." [13]

With the "back to basic" movement, many persons both lay and professional are concentrating on the cognitive skills as basic, but maintain that the students' attitude toward reading is also basic. They state that if "attitude is favorable and the motivations are appropriate, comprehension works at peak efficiency." [14]

12 Doris Roettger, "Elementary Students' Attitudes Toward Reading", Reading Teacher, Volume 33, January 1980, p. 453

13 Thomas N. Turner and Alexander J. Estill, "Promising Practices for Improving Reading Attitudes, 25 page paper ERIC 188-108 presented at the annual meeting of the Southeastern Regional conference of the International Reading Assn., Nashville, Tn. Feb. 6-9, 1980

14 Ibid., p. 3

ANTHONY D. FREDERICKS

Since reading achievement is affected by student attitude toward reading, Anthony D. Fredericks (1982) stated that teachers should plan instruction that promotes positive feelings. Some appropriate activities for teachers to use in their elementary classrooms might include: scheduling book parties, distributing a class "News Report", stocking the classroom with books and having students design and produce their own books. Fredericks states that, "Exposing students to reading activities beyond the basal text is crucial in developing positive attitudes towards reading. Students need to understand how reading affects every aspect of their lives and how they can participate fully in the reading process." [15]

ESTES ATTITUDE SCALE

The Estes Attitude Scale (1971) is one of the instruments to be used in this research paper with grades seven and eight. The scale was created for teachers to measure how students feel about reading in general. It is referred to by some authorities as a "Likert" of "summated ratings" type. Two specifically stated reasons for use of the Likert Scale by Estes were its "ease of use, and its generally high accuracy." [16]

The scale consists of twenty statements to which the students respond "I strongly agree," "I strongly disagree." Each of the statements in this scale was worded in such a way as to call to mind the subject of

15 Anthony D. Fredericks, "Developing Positive Reading Attitudes", The Reading Teacher, Volume 36, October 1982, p. 39

16 Thomas H. Estes, "A Scale to Measure Attitudes Toward Reading" Journal of Reading, November 1971, p. 135

reading A summation of the values of each student's responses on the scale will yield a quantitative representation of his attitude toward reading." [17] The scale will allow teachers of reading to measure objectively how pupils feel about reading - allowing a view of the pupil not presently permitted by testing programs.

In 1974, Kenneth L. Dulin and Robert D. Chester recognized, in an evaluation of the Estes Attitude Scale, that the attitudes that the students hold about reading are as important as the skills they have mastered. Until the development of the Estes Attitude Scale, Dulin and Chester claimed that very little had been done in developing valid and reliable measure of reading attitude, particularly at the secondary school level. After a validation of the Estes Attitude Scale, the authors suggested that future research could include measurement of high school students' attitudes towards books and reading.

THE IMPORTANCE OF READING VIEWPOINTS

How do students view the reading process? Are the strategies used by good readers different from those used by poor readers? These questions are not new. They have been of concern to many teachers for years. Because of this current interest in pupils' views of the reading process, more information is accessible.

Buswell (1920) reported that it appeared good comprehenders were guided by thought units. Golenkoff and Rosenski (1976), Perfetti and Hogaboan (1975), and Weber (1970) have found in numerous studies that the poor comprehender often reads in a word-by word manner and seems to

17 Ibid., p. 138

use the same approach to read orally and silently. Canney and Winograd (1979) found that poor readers viewed reading as a word-decoding process, while better readers viewed reading as a meaning-centered process.

JOHN DOWNING

John Downing (1969) in an article on the way children think about reading stresses that "the very logic of young children causes two serious difficulties in teaching them to read and write." [18] Children have difficulty in understanding the purpose of reading and they cannot handle abstract technical terms. Downing maintained that Jesse Reid's (1966) investigations were one of the outstanding research contributions of the decade. These studies supported Vygotsky's (1962) earlier conclusions that reading was a mysterious activity to young beginners and that they had no expectations as to the purpose or use of it.

Downing indicated that he supported Vygotsky's conclusions that direct teaching of concepts is impossible and might prevent appropriate behavior and attitudes for reading. He stated that it is important not to stress verbal rules before children have had concrete experiences and understanding because children could be confused about the purpose of reading and it might "take them a very long time to learn the essential truth about reading which is that it is to convey interesting information from the author to reader. Quite a large proportion of pupils never learn this vital truth and so never become readers." [19]

18 John Downing, "How Children Think About Reading", Reading Teacher, Volume 23, December 1969, p. 217

19 Ibid., p. 227

JERRY L. JOHNS

In 1971, Jerry L. Johns conducted an exploratory investigation suggesting that children's concepts of reading be compared to their reading ability. "Is there a difference in how good and poor readers view the reading process?" [20] In a subsequent study (1972), one hundred and three children were interviewed individually. The investigator asked one question, "What is reading?" Each child's response was recorded on tape so it could be later analyzed and classified into one of five categories. Category 1: No response, "I don't know", or a vague, irrelevant, or circular response. Category 2: reflected classroom procedures or activities generally associated with formal reading instruction. Category 3: word recognition, meaningful if the child thought reading as word recognition such as "Saying the words." Category 4: a meaningful response was considered if the child considered reading as understanding. Category 5: was meaning and word recognition. This category included responses which defined reading as a process of saying words and understanding the story. Responses were analyzed and divided into two categories: meaningful and non-meaningful. "A chi-square of 3.84 was necessary for significance at the .05 level. A chi-square of 6.04 was obtained." [21]

Johns' results supported the hypothesis that a significantly greater number of meaningful definitions of reading were frequently given by good readers than poor readers.

20 Jerry L. Johns, "Concepts of Reading Among Good and Poor Readers", Education, Volume 95, No. 1 Fall 1974, p. 58

21 Ibid., p. 59

John and Ellis (1976) conducted a study using the same procedures as in the previous investigation. They concluded that many students have little or no understanding of reading across the grades, that most of the meaningful responses to their questions described reading as a decoding process and that many children view reading as an activity occurring with a textbook in the classroom environment.

GEORGE CANNEY AND PETER WINOGRAD

George Canney and Peter Winograd (1979) advanced the thesis that a student develops a schema for reading. They describe how a student's schema for reading might develop and how an inappropriate schema for reading may be one factor contributing to ineffective reading comprehension and performance. "Many poor readers do not perceive the importance of top-down processing in reading, do not bring their linguistic competences to bear on the text, fail to perceive the relevance of skill instruction in reading and thus are responding in a mechanical ritualistic manner to the text." [22]

Canney and Winograd interviewed twenty-four students in their investigation of the question "What is Reading?" They developed a fifteen item questionnaire to determine "whether or not elementary students understood that reading was a process aimed at extracting information from text." [23]

Questions 1 and 2 asked students what they liked and did not like about reading. Questions 3, 4, 8, and 14 attempted to extract perceptions

22 George Canney and Peter Winograd, "Schemata for Reading and Reading Comprehension Performance" 1980, Eric No. 169-520, p. 3
23 Ibid., p. 19

of themselves as readers and what understanding they had about how to improve. Questions 5, 6, and 7 asked about the application of reading skills to other material outside of school. Questions 9-13 dealt with how and when people in general learn to read and what might interfere with that process. Questions 9, 13, and 14 gave information about the students' knowledge of reading strengths and weaknesses. They positioned question 15 last - "What is Reading?" to allow the subjects to warm up to the subject to avoid "I don't know" answers. As a result of this investigation, Canney and Winograd concluded that poor readers viewed reading as a mysterious, word-focused decoding process. Better readers viewed reading as a meaning-centered process.

BESS OSBURN AND CLEBORNE D. MADDUS

In a recent study concerning students viewpoints about the nature of reading, Bess Osburn and Cleborne D. Maddux (1983) concluded that there was a clear distinction between the way good and poor readers viewed the reading process. Their study was initiated by a lack of improvement on pretest and posttest scores in a university remedial reading class. The authors acknowledged that relationships between knowledge about reading and success in reading had been demonstrated at the elementary school and high school levels in previous studies by Canney and Winograd (1979) and Elder (1980). Could this same phenomenon be operating at the university level?

Osburn's and Maddux's study involved eighty university students, both remedial and non-remedial, who answered nine interview questions

used by Elder (1980). "All interviews were audio-taped and the answers independently coded by researchers as answers focusing on the word (word-centered answers) and those focusing on units larger than a word (meaning-centered answers). Meaning-centered answers were assigned three points while word-centered answers were assigned one point." [24]

The final analysis of the study indicated that good and poor readers view the reading process quite differently even at the university level. "The good readers understood that reading is a meaning-gaining process, while the poor readers viewed reading as a word-decoding and pronunciation process." [25] The studies with younger children had shown similar results. Consequently, the two authors pointed out that there is a possibility the schools are neglecting an important facet of reading instruction.

SUMMARY

There have been numerous articles written and studies made about the necessity and importance of understanding students various attitudes towards reading. These positive attitudes and viewpoints contributed heavily toward the failure or success of reading achievement as well as reading in the content areas.

Investigative authorities have developed instruments for the purpose of measuring reading attitudes and have tried to clarify the relationship further for teachers of reading as well as establish a correlation to reading achievements.

24 Bess Osburn and Cleborne Maddux, "What is Reading? Student Viewpoints", Journal of Developmental and Remedial Education, Volume 6, Winter 1983, p. 8

25 Ibid., p. 9

CHAPTER III

DESIGN OF STUDY

INTRODUCTION

This chapter will explain the procedures used in the investigation of the relationship between the viewpoints and attitudes toward reading of low, normal and high ability seventh and eighth graders and their reading achievement. Sources of data, methods of gathering data, and a description of the data gathering instruments will also be discussed.

PROCEDURE

Ten interview questions used by Elder (1980) were presented to the low, normal and high ability students, to study the students' viewpoints toward reading. All interview responses were recorded.

The Estes Reading Attitude Scale was used in this study to investigate attitudes that the students have toward reading. A conclusion will be made based on the findings of the data gathered from the viewpoint questions, attitude questionnaires and the relationship to the students' achievement.

SOURCES OF DATA

The sample involved in this study consists of sixty students from two urban school systems in grades seven and eight. The reading comprehension subtest percentiles from the Stanford Achievement Test were used to categorize the sixty students as low, normal and high ability readers.

METHODS OF GATHERING DATA

The approval of the building principals and staff of teachers involved in this study was the first step taken before any data was gathered.

Authorities in the field of investigating children's attitudes, including Doris Roettger, Bess Osburn and Cleborne Maddux, suggest that the use of the comprehension subtest score of a reliable standardized test is one way to choose a sample for a viewpoint and attitude survey. Therefore, the authors of this study have used the comprehension subtest of the Stanford Achievement Test given by the schools involved to select the low, normal and high ability readers. A low-ability reader, for the use in this study, is a student who rates below the 35th percentile. A normal-ability reader is a child who rates between 36th percentile and the 65th percentile. A high-ability reader is a child who rates above the 65th percentile. Therefore, three groups were established, each consisting of a total of twenty children. The high-ability students were selected from the schools' enrichment literature programs, the normal-ability students from grade-level basal reading programs, and the low-ability students from remedial reading classes.

When administering the Elder viewpoint questions, the day, a time and room were scheduled for this purpose. The students responses were recorded and the answers were scored by the authors.

The Estes Attitude Scale was administered in the appropriate reading class. The purpose of both tests was explained to the students and it was stressed that they should answer the items as honestly as possible.

The authors explained any question or terminology the students did not understand on the Estes Reading Attitude Scale. The students read the twenty items silently and then responded to the five-point choices. The groups were very cooperative and enthusiastic during the administration of the surveys. The authors then hand-scored all papers to classify each student as a positive or negative reader according to the results of the Scale.

DESCRIPTION OF DATA GATHERING INSTRUMENTS

The data-gathering instruments (appendix A) used for this study were the Elder (1980) viewpoint questions for the purpose of determining "if knowledge or beliefs about what constitutes good reading have an influence on actual reading effectiveness". [1]

The Estes Attitude Scale for the use of measuring reading attitudes of children in grades three through twelve was also used.

The Elder (1980) interview questions were presented to each student in the three groupings. Each student was asked to answer the ten questions as candidly as possible. Meaning-centered answers were assigned three points while word-centered answers were assigned one point.

1 Bess Osburn and Cleborne D. Maddux, "What is Reading? Student Viewpoint", Journal of Developmental and Remedial Education, Volume 6, No. 2, Winter 1982, pp. 8

The Estes Attitude Scale has a five-point choice format. The student is asked to respond to the twenty items pertaining to reading from a scale of "I strongly agree" to "I strongly disagree". Some of the statements are worded in a negative manner, while the others are of a positive nature. The score range possible is 20-100, with 60 as the mean. A positive attitude is classified as existing when a student scores from 61-100, while a negative attitude exists when the scores are from 20-60.

SUMMARY

The information derived from the reading attitude instrument and the viewpoint questions was compiled and the results of the findings will be presented and analyzed in the succeeding chapter.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF DATA

INTRODUCTION

Chapter III discussed the procedures for this study, this chapter will present the results. A review of the study and an explanation of the data, including the items in the Elder questions, the opinionaire and tables will be discussed.

REVIEW OF EXPERIMENT

To investigate the viewpoints and attitudes students have toward reading, The Elder (1980) questions and the Estes Reading Attitude Scale were administered. Three groups of students were selected according to the passage comprehension scores on the Stanford Achievement Test to determine who was a high ability reader (65th percentile and above), normal ability (between the 35th and 65th percentile), and low ability (below the 35th percentile). Sixty students in grades seven and eight met with the authors who interviewed and administered the viewpoint questions and attitude scale.

The Elder questions were administered individually in a classroom and the Estes Attitude Scale opinionaire was administered in the students' reading classes. The importance of honesty in responding to the items was stressed with all students. The interview was then coded by the authors as focusing on units larger than a word (meaning-centered) and as answers focusing on the word (word-centered).

The Estes Reading Attitude opinionaires were hand-scored and each student was classified as a positive or negative reader.

Following the scoring, the raw scores for the Stanford Achievement Test, the Elder questions and the Estes Reading Attitude Scale were listed for the purpose of comparison.

RESULTS

Summary of the data was compiled from the raw scores of the low, normal and high ability readers to correlate achievement with viewpoint, attitude with achievement, and attitude with viewpoint. (appendix B)

Table One presents the means, standard deviation and correlations of the low ability readers. Table Two presents the data of the normal ability readers and Table Three presents the data for the high ability readers.

TABLE I

Means, Standard Deviation and Correlation of the Low Ability Readers

	Mean	S.D.	r
Achievement	29.25	6.2	.28
Viewpoint	17.1	2.57	
Attitude	73.95	13.88	.01
Viewpoint	17.1	2.57	
Attitude	73.95	13.88	.11
Achievement	29.25	6.2	

TABLE 2

Means, Standard Deviation and Correlation of the Normal Ability Readers

	Mean	S.D.	r
Achievement	43.15	4.83	.09
Viewpoint	22.35	3.17	
Attitude	70	8.73	.14
Viewpoint	22.35	3.17	
Attitude	70	8.73	.44
Achievement	43.15	4.83	

TABLE 3

Means, Standard Deviation and Correlation of the High Ability Readers

	Mean	S.D.	r
Achievement	61.4	3.59	.18
Viewpoint	26.4	2.11	
Attitude	76.2	10.28	.19
Viewpoint	26.4	2.11	
Attitude	76.2	10.28	.18
Achievement	61.4	3.59	

In order to determine whether or not there were differences in the way the total sample group compared to the separate ability groups in the area of achievement, attitude and viewpoint, the mean and standard deviation for the total sample were computed.

Table Four presents the means and standard deviations and correlates in achievement, viewpoint and attitude of the total group.

TABLE 4

Means and Standard Deviations of total group

	Mean	S.D.
Achievement	44.6	14.15
Viewpoint	21.9	4.64
Attitude	73.4	11.28

Correlation of total group

	r
Achievement Viewpoint	.76
Attitude Viewpoint	.05
Attitude Viewpoint	.09

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

INTRODUCTION

The results of this study suggest conclusions on how students view the reading process. The expected results concerning student attitudes as noted in similar studies were not substantiated. This chapter will discuss these conclusions, principal finding, recommendations for further research, and implications for reading.

RESTATEMENT OF PROBLEM

A research study was conducted among sixty low, normal and high ability readers in grades seven and eight to investigate their attitude and their viewpoints of reading.

PRINCIPAL FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

The research hypothesis that states attitudes toward reading will vary significantly with achievement, as reported in other studies by Dulin and Chester, Roettger, Fredericks, and Estes, was not supported by this sample data. The correlation between attitude and viewpoint of 0.9 is negligible. The results revealed that most students have a positive attitude toward reading regardless of their achievement level. Of the sixty participants, only five students revealed a negative attitude: one student in the low ability group, two in the middle ability group and two in the high ability group.

Since the correlation of attitude with achievement was negligible, the authors further compared attitude and viewpoint. This comparison yielded a negligible relationship with a correlation of .05.

The hypothesis stating that there is significant relationship between heterogenous sampling of students' ability and their viewpoints toward reading was supported with a correlation of .76. This is a substantial relationship. It should be noted that these results occurred only in relationship to the total group, not when the individual ability groups were studied.

These results are similar to the findings of Osburn and Maddux in their post-secondary research on the way the reading process is viewed by students of varying reading ability.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Although the results of the group studied do not support the influence of attitude on achievement, recommendations for future research should be considered.

A similar age group in other schools should be studied to compare findings. Are attitudes a result of teachers and programs? Would tests administered to parents, students and teachers show a linkage of attitude?

Although the sample's results on Estes Attitude Scale produced a positive mean score, a post-test would be valuable after a year of instruction to measure any attitude change.

In reference to viewpoints, an interesting follow-up study would be a comparison of students' viewpoints, an interesting follow-up study would be a comparison of students' viewpoints from schools using the analytic method versus the synthetic method of teaching the reading process. Would the early method of teaching reading influence the students' current viewpoints and their achievements?

IMPLICATIONS FOR INSTRUCTION

Although this current study does not substantiate a relationship between attitude and achievement when analyzed according to levels of achievement other studies have, and, therefore, teachers should continue to emphasize the positive aspects of reading with their students.

Since this study indicated a substantial relationship between the total samples achievement level and not students' views of the reading process, students should be taught to alternate strategies to gain meaning from the written word. Comprehension and thinking skills should be emphasized throughout all levels of reading instruction so that students will view reading as a meaning-centered process rather than a letter or word-centered process.

SUMMARY

The study indicates that the viewpoint of the child toward reading is of greater importance than his attitude towards reading in relationship to achievement. Therefore, concerned educators should explore the child's concepts of reading and spend time developing more effective use of reading strategies.

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APPENDIX A

ELDER - QUESTIONNAIRE ON STUDENT VIEWPOINTS TOWARD READING

1. When you are reading and you come to something you can't figure out, what dod you do?

2. Think of someone you know who is a good reader. What is it about the way she/he reads that makes it good reading?

3. Do you think she/he ever comes to something she/he doesn't know?

4. If she/he did come to something she/he doesn't know when she/he is reading, what do you thing she/he should do?

5. How would you try to help someone who was having trouble with their reading.

6. Does a person have to look at every letter in order to read something?

7. Does a person have to look at every word in order to read something?

8. How do you think a teacher would try to help someone who was having trouble with his/her reading?

9. Do you remember how you first learned to read?

10. How do you rate yourself as a reader?

PASSAGE MODE

ESTES ATTITUDE SCALE

STATEMENT	Strongly	Agree	Undecided	Dis-agree	Strongly Disagree
1. Reading is for learning but not for enjoyment.					
2. Money spent on book is well spent.					
3. There is nothing to be gained from reading books.					
4. Books are a bore.					
5. Reading is a good way to spend spare time.					
6. Sharing books in class is a waste of time.					
7. Reading turns me on.					
8. Reading is only for grade grubbers.					
9. Books aren't usually good enough to finish.					
10. Reading is reward to me.					
11. Reading becomes boring after about an hour.					
12. Most books are too long and dull.					
13. Free reading doesn't teach anything.					
14. There should be more time for free reading during the school day.					
15. There are many books which I hope to read.					
16. Books should not be read except for class requirements.					
17. Reading is something I can do without.					
18. A certain amount of summer vacation should be set aside for reading.					
19. Books make good presents.					
20. Reading is dull.					

APPENDIX B

RAW SCORE DATA

Low Ability

Student Number	Stanford Achievement Subtest Comprehension	Elder Viewpoint	Estes Attitude
1	37	17	74
2	36	19	62
3	32	15	71
4	37	17	65
5	35	19	95
6	21	17	87
7	34	23	78
8	32	17	91
9	36	19	63
10	24	13	71
11	28	18	43
12	30	13	68
13	33	20	91
14	26	15	90
15	32	15	84
16	29	17	67
17	17	17	68
18	23	19	79
19	23	13	75
20	20	19	53
Total Raw Score	585	340	1480

RAW SCORE DATA

Normal Ability

Student Number	Stanford Achievement Subtest Comprehension	Elder Viewpoint	Estes Attitude
21	46	18	62
22	45	24	68
23	42	24	69
24	42	26	75
25	45	20	60
26	47	22	82
27	43	16	73
28	38	24	80
29	45	22	71
30	40	28	75
31	36	22	64
32	35	18	82
33	39	21	77
34	36	22	70
35	42	28	62
36	52	20	45
37	49	24	72
38	48	24	76
39	50	20	66
40	43	24	71
Total Raw Score	863	447	1400

RAW SCORE DATA

High Ability

Student Number	Stanford Achievement Subtest Comprehension	Elder Viewpoint	Estes Attitude
41	71	26	83
42	67	24	75
43	64	28	82
44	63	26	82
45	66	24	86
46	63	28	71
47	58	28	82
48	62	26	80
49	61	26	80
50	59	30	92
51	56	26	75
52	62	30	46
53	58	24	67
54	58	24	73
55	59	28	77
56	61	26	88
57	59	28	60
58	61	26	70
59	59	28	76
60	61	22	79
Total Raw Score	1228	528	1524